

BUSEY (S. C.)

ADDRESS OF WELCOME

TO THE

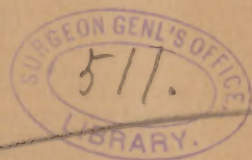
Association of Military Surgeons.

BY

SAMUEL C. BUSEY, M. D.

President M. S., D. C.

DELIVERED AT WASHINGTON, MAY 1, 1894.



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THE ASSOCIATION OF
MILITARY SURGEONS OF THE UNITED STATES,
WASHINGTON, D. C., *March 19, 1894.*

SAMUEL C. BUSEY, M. D.,
President Medical Society,
District of Columbia, 1545 I Street N. W.

MY DEAR DOCTOR: The Fourth Annual Meeting of the Association of Military Surgeons of the United States will be held in this city May 1st, 2d, and 3d, next. The first meeting will take place at Albaugh's Opera House on the morning of May 1st. The Committee of Arrangements will be exceedingly grateful to you if you will deliver an address of welcome to the delegates of the Association on the part of the Medical Society of the District of Columbia.

Very respectfully,

GEORGE HENDERSON,
Chairman Committee of Arrangements.

At the meeting of the society held March 23, after the reading of the above communication, Dr. McArdle moved that Dr. Busey be requested to accept the invitation if agreeable to himself, which was adopted.



ADDRESS OF WELCOME
TO THE
ASSOCIATION OF MILITARY SURGEONS

BY SAMUEL C. BUSEY, M. D.,

President, M. S., D. C.

Delivered at Washington, May 1, 1894.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN : I am here, as the representative of the Medical Society of the District of Columbia, to extend to you the right hand of fraternal fellowship and comity of a society which is one of twelve medical societies in this country that have passed the age of seventy-five years in active and continuous existence, and to bid you welcome to the city of its birth, in which it has lived these many years, contemporaneous in history, progress, and power with the growth, development, and prosperity of this metropolis, and now, as heretofore, commands the respect and confidence of the community. Its beginning was inspired by that spirit of beneficence which bound its founders together in one compact body of such, and only such, physicians as were qualified to practise the healing art and to promote and disseminate medical and surgical knowledge, that the people might be protected from the wrongs and injuries inflicted by charlatans and pretenders. Throughout its long life it has accepted, maintained,

and followed the maxim of the Republic—"Union, now and forever, one and inseparable," as alike applicable to the advancement of scientific medicine as to the maintenance of the union of these States. With firm, steadfast, and unwavering devotion to the highest aims of medical science, it has successfully passed through many vicissitudes of political agitation, bid defiance to assaults from without, and outlived schisms in its own membership.

It passed through the period of internecine strife and emerged from that conflict of havoc, bloodshed, and waste of treasure increased in number and power, and stands here to-day to bid welcome to this organization, which is the outgrowth of that development, and the first to unite in organized and cohesive effort to utilize, promote, advance, and perfect the science of military medicine and surgery; and let it be said here and now that if those armies could have been equipped with such men and appliances as they could be to-day, the missiles of warfare would have found many thousands less of victims, and untold millions of treasure would have been saved. The war gave impetus to new thought, to new and broader conceptions of military duty, and the achievements of modern American surgery owe their inception to the opportunities and lessons which you and others have expanded and applied in the interest of a common humanity. And now this country holds the sceptre of surgery.

In 1858 the lamented Harvey Lindsley, in his address of welcome to the American Medical Association, then assembled in this city, after giving expression to his regret and mortification that the city was so barren of all that would interest the votaries of medical science and attract the pleasure-seeker and tourist, he added, in language that reads like the inspiration of prophecy, "the day is not far distant . . . when by the liberality of a great people

our public buildings, our literary and scientific institutions, our national parks and botanic gardens will be worthy of the grand metropolis of a nation which, perhaps within the next half century, will be the most populous, powerful, and wealthy in Christendom." I heard those words thirty-six years ago, and I stand here to-day, representing the same organization, to bid you welcome to the Capital, in which every prediction has been realized, and yet it has but reached the stage of growth and development which is but the promise of what it is to be in the future, when, as the Nation's Capital, reflecting its power, glory, and wealth, it will surpass in all that pertains to art, literature, science, civilization, and human comforts and luxuries the most favored metropolis of the civilized world.

That you may better appreciate the modesty of Lindsley's description and the fulness of his prophecy, let me tell you that when I came here, some years earlier, there were but two streets partly paved, but few sidewalks paved beyond the centre of the city, they being, for the most part, improved by midway ridges of gravel and coal ashes, but there were long stretches of zigzag paths along which pedestrians could walk only in single file. There were no telephones, street tramways, nor cable and trolley systems of rapid transit to fill the wards of an emergency hospital and encourage the incidental sciences of embalming and undertaking; street transportation was limited to a few hotel omnibuses, through-line coaches, a few hackney carriages, a corps of night-liners, as now, and Shanks' mare. From the Capitol to Georgetown several antiquated busses ran at irregular intervals along Pennsylvania avenue. The fare for a ride each way for each passenger was one eleven-penny bit, but a colored nurse or maid could not get a ride at any price unless she had somebody's white baby in her lap.

The back yards of many private dwellings were decorated with pig-stys, cow-sheds and pens for the gangs of unyoked geese. During the day the animals and fowls roamed at will, singly or in herds or flocks, through the streets and over the fields in lordly insolence. Garbage was thrown into the carriage-ways or back alleys, and swine were the privileged and protected scavengers. To jostle against or drive over one of these municipal functionaries when out on his tour of sanitary inspection incurred a cash penalty or brief servitude in the workhouse. The swine nuisance dominated the city authorities until a gentleman was knocked down and killed by one running between his legs, and the family milch-cows were finally driven to the shambles by the more economical and adulterated milk supplies from the dairy farms of Maryland and Virginia. The goose industry bade defiance to every protest until the robber bands learned the flavor of their flesh. During that early period I have trudged on foot, through sunshine and shower, along the well-beaten paths for short cuts across the fields and through the slashes, in search of some lonely hut situated over yonder behind or near by some other equally undefined locality, here and there, along the way, driving a drove of swine from their mire or hustling away from the corporation bulls; or during the night along streets, alleys, and by-ways so dark with blackness that eyes were most useful when closed, or so dimly lighted with lard-oil lamps so remotely separated they seemed like *ignes fatui* enticing one into the dismal realms of hobgoblins and ghosts; or, perchance, in some localities—now traversed by well-paved streets and avenues adorned on either side with palatial residences—along the pathways only trodden by the beasts of the field.

Then the war came, and with it a transformation not

less surprising than the primitive methods and conditions to which I have referred. The barren farm and pasture lands were occupied with encampments, fortifications, parade grounds, hospitals, wagon-yards, mule-pens, and other munitions of warfare. The streets were in continuous martial array, with troops equipped for the field. In brief, the city was one great impregnable fortress, protecting a government that never for one moment faltered in courage or paused in prosecution. With these stupendous preparations and masses of troops there came the *omnium gatherum* of contrabands, refugees, scalawags, camp followers, tramps, substitute brokers, wild-cat-money changers, fiat-money people, office-seekers as now, and, last but not least, the croakers who lived upon the innocent credulity of timid women and cowardice of malingerers who wanted war but somebody else to do the fighting. The croaker tarries with us yet and continues, like "querulous frogs in muddy pools," to croak. Nevertheless, those of you who saw the city then will mark the contrast now. Peace reigns where martial law dominated. Progress and development have marked every decade of the city's history since the close of the war. Now go where you may please along these beautiful streets, these avenues of foliage trees, or out upon the hill-tops that environ the city, and the prospect and landscape will leave the memory of beauty in nature and excellence in art. The monument in honor of him whose name the city bears rises from the lowlands high into space above, as the nation's memorial to him who was "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen;" the Capitol, in which assembles annually the highest tribunals of legislation and justice, stands, in beauty and perfection of architectural finish, above the rising and setting sun, in token of the supreme majesty of a united people; the new Library building approach-

ing completion, with its gold-gilded dome reflecting and diffusing the rays of sunlight and sun life in emblematic dissemination of the knowledge to be stored within its granite walls; the new Naval Observatory, far away from the busy mart and travel, towards the western limits of the city, is a fitting compliment to that branch of the service which in the coming future will make the nation the master of the seas; and right here in the open park, near by, the historic mansion, with its walls hanging in portraiture of the men who have filled the highest office in the gift of a great and free people; and then, too, on the highland beyond the Potomac, overlooking the city, is the bivouac of seventeen thousand dead, whose glory will never fade. All these, with many other commemorative memorials, are but the symbols of the nation's pride, wealth, gratitude, prowess, and majesty.

I cannot detain you with an enumeration of the charitable, educational, and eleemosynary foundations which mark the progress since the development began, but must broadly state that in learned and scientific institutions, departments, bureaus and great national libraries, with their corps of experts in every branch of science, this city offers opportunities unsurpassed in any city in this country. With three universities fully equipped and in successful operation, another with ten millions of people behind it is preparing to garner the harvest waiting in ripeness for the sickle and the scythe.

And now, coming closer to that branch of science which most concerns you, I must remind you that the same spirit which has given impetus to new thought and to new and enlarged conceptions of scientific research has established in this city a medical library greater in number and value of volumes than any similar library in the world, and an anatomical and pathological museum unsurpassed in the variety of its collections. These

foundations are outgrowths of the war. They have been developed at such trifling expense and have contributed so much to the promotion and attainment of a higher standard of medical education that one feels mean at the economy which seeks to limit their expansion.

In this connection let me say here and to you, gentlemen, who are members of that profession whose mission will not be attained until the causes of diseases are eradicated and death is limited to the ailments to which flesh is necessarily heir, and the processes of waste and decay, that the time has come when it should assert itself with all the vigor, force, and power which a hundred thousand men united in a common cause can develop and exercise. There is not one family nor one voter throughout this broad land that some one of us cannot reach and tell the story of parsimony which denies to sanitary science, protective and preventive medicine the opportunity to accomplish the full measure of philanthropy. Nay, even more ; this great and munificent Government educates its military officers, builds ships of war, adorns villages with costly public buildings, wastes millions on rivers and harbors, permits every quack, pretender, impostor, and fraud to practise medicine who may find dupes to gull, deceive, maim, or kill, and seeks to strangle medical research by withholding the trifling pittance of a hundred journal subscriptions. With all this expenditure and waste of treasure there is not a poor boy or woman in all the land who can acquire a first-class medical education except by the sweat of his or her brow, or charity of some benevolent citizen, and yet there is not one man in either the national or State legislatures who, when sick and thinks the devil is at his door, waiting for his departed spirit, will fail to cry for help, relief, and time to make his election sure. ,

In conclusion, I offer you the hospitality of our good will, and beg you to believe us to be your good friends.

